VIEWS OF A DISTINGUISHED AMERICAN ACTOR.

Our Language the Most Abused Tongue in the World, Especially in the United States -Slipshod Utterance, Provincial Mispronunciation are Common Everywhere Some Examples of Carelessness and Worse-Actors as Had as Any Mrs. Fiske and Miss Mariowe Exceptions - Great Players No Longer Models for Advocates and Preachers.

The English language is becoming more and more the language of the world, in commerce, social intercourse and in promoting peace among the nations. When spoken by the best speakers it is the most vigorous as well as the sweetest and most poetical language. Yet, in its usual utterance or delivery, even among educated prople, it is the most abused language in the world, especially in the United States.

The vest few men and women who have a high standard of speech have not been able to make that standard generally recognized, and, consequently, there have been manifest for the last twenty years a carelessness and vulgarity of speech, accompanied by slouchiness of manner, in all the professions and in society, which may well bring forth the query: Is the art of delivery a lost art, and what is to be the end of this shameful decadence?

The main essentials of delivery, on which the clearness of our discourse depends, are correct pronunciation and distinct enunciation. Manner, which includes attitude and gesture, is another

In France, the standard of speech is irrevocably the French of Paris; in Germany, the German of Hanover, in Italy the Italian of Florence; in Spain, the Spanish of Madrid

There is a tradition of speech in those cities which neither eccentricity nor caprice has been able to destroy.

What is the standard of English speech? It cannot be located in any one place. It might be fair to say that he speaks the best English whose speech does not betray his nationality and environment, whether he be from London, New York, Chicago, St.

edocated Americans and English is one of incoration and inflection, not of vowel sounds and it may be added that no American need feel flattered when told that he ensales like an Englishman, for the American has more variety of speech.

The principal a savinge of the Englishcost a us more wit i birn than with the Ameri-The English are not forever dickering and cleaning the pronunciation of wards. Nathing scenns to delight the Ameriprovincialisms of his particular locality and environment to words which have elegatore had a stable pronunctation for generations some years ago Webster nonneed car, and for years the spinsters of New England surrounded their oleander cars and sarding bods with clam-shell borders. At a time when the theatre was emerging from the curses of the prejudiced. and when same persons had ceased to consider it a concection of the devi', Worcester spoke of the dravina, and then we began to hear of Cleopaytra.

Happily the Anglo-Saxon is a great trav-

DECADENCE OF ENGLISH SPEECH eller, and people have come out of their narrow shells. To speak good English one must travel or associate with those who have travelled. Every country has its dialects. It is not so many years ago that a north Scotsman could hardly understand a south Scotsman, and the worst in sult you could give to a native of the region of Robert Burns was to tell him that he talked like a native of Aberdeen. An inhabitant of the county of Armagh, Ireland, detects the speech of the county of Kerry.

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and vice versa. The United States has its own indigenous dialects, besides those introduced from non-English speaking countries. may be classified broadly as Yankee, Western and Southern, aithough of late a new cockney dialect has been introduced by the American "smart set," which affords much diversion to our English cousins.

It is the diffusion of these dialects into our every day speech which, if allowed to proceed, will work ruin to the beauty of our language.

When even college professors use such when even conege processors use sach vulgarisms of speech, as nooz for news, git for get, gut for got, ben for been, and so on, almost ad infinitum, it is time to call a halt. That which Artemus Ward meant for satirical dialect when he wrote from Boston. "I meant to have allooded to the Grate Orgin." is no exaggeration of most of the English heard to day in schools and

A few Jeremiahs have already protested in the minor key, but the minor key does not appeal forcibly to Americans, a large

part of whom are athletic-mad.

A Jeremiad, even if uttered through a megaphone, cannot reach the ears of a vast population on the golf links, the gridthe diamond, the tennis courts and the

any suggested reform of speech may be interpreted: "This is the age of steam, electricity and the telegraph. We must have rapid transit in all things, even in education. You are too slow. Art is short, because life is fleeting. New methods short, because life is lecting. New methods of inefficient insufficiency are what we want. We prefer to take lessons in singing, on the piano, the violin or the mand-lin rather than in speaking. Our speech is at

rather than in speaking. Our speech is at least INTELLIGIBLE.

This is the age of steam and electricity with a vengeance. It is the age of indolent superficiality skimming over the sucface of things in its alleged eclecticism of education and "culture." It is the age of overcrawded curricula in schools and colleges This is the age of steam and electricity with a congeance. It is the age of indolent superficiality skipming over the surface of things in its alleged eclecticism of education and "culture". It is the age of overcumber over the superficiality skipming over the surface of things in its alleged eclecticism of education and "culture". It is the age of overcumber over the superfive constructed English, but, unhappily, delivered with a manner not suggestive of Grecian grace. Though from its assurance it was meant to suggest raturalness and case forth, Povs and girls, if you can speak a word correctly, it matters not how you pronounce it. You will be understood this left arm was akinioo and his legs over the set. PRONOUNCE II. You will be understood promehow, and if you are not, it makes no difference. After all, if you speak too distriction and discoveredly, you may not be easily understood.

The hissing of steam and the generation

production of a Shakesperian play, and you will see a panorama of splendidiy-designed scenery, a cunningly devised scheme of lighting, with "the star" chased by the lime-light, appropriate costumes and artistic groupings. But the delivery of the lines retains all the hideous mouthings and vices of fifty years ago, vices reformed altogether by Edwin Forrest and Edwin Booth in their later days, but now revived and vices of fifty was a great and Edwin Booth in their later days, but now revived in "modern productions." Modern? As far as delivery is concerned they are, in the words of Aristophanes, "antediluvian and full of grasshoppers." These are parious times, supported.

not time to dwell o sil the There is not time to dwell of the the causes and growth of this deplayable decadence of speech, which appeared and developed like a pestilence, all at once and in every direction. It is enough that the plague is here, and it must be met. It ought to be stamped out in homes, but little assistance is to be expected in those quarters for the plague is as 'ordinary'. little assistance is to be expected in those quarters, for the plague is as "ordinary" as the "iunacy" of love. A peculiar phase of the disease is the unconsciousness of being afflicted by its insidious growth, but as ignorance of the law does not prevent a transgresser from being punished by the law, so the unconscious violator of speech is subject to criticism, no ter how lofty his position.

While in our material growth and prosperity we have learned to consider our-selves as little below the dwellers of the angelic belt, we are, nevertheless, a nation of imitators, and it is well that the country of imitators, and it is well that the country has produced some worthy models.

Since the deaths of Wendell Phillips and Henry Ward Beecher no one, by the most elastic stretch of the imagination, has appeared who in manner is worthy to be called an orator. Great speeches may have been written, but their delivery has not been great. There is no American orator living who is worthy to be imitated.

I would like to give a few instances to show the power of imitation. A young I would like to give a lew instances to show the power of imitation. A young author of distinction was invited to deliver a poem before the Phi Beta Kappa of a great American university. Not being accustomed to public speaking he took the

The hissing of steam and the generation of electricity in the educational scheme are nothing but the agents of restless and ineffectual persons who indulge in pother and parade. It has been well said that the real work of this world is performed in silence.

It is not alone in schools and colleges that one hears detestable English, and seas loose-jointedness and awkwardness.

Listen to the clergy. No wonder that Bishop Potter lately pronounced the entrance into the pulpit of a minister unable to speak the English language with correctness and elegance an impertment intrusion.

Go to the Senate and House of Representatives, to the State Legislature and to the Courts of Justice! You will see slouchy in I indolent attitudes you will hear Senators and Representatives butcher the King's English while twisting the British lion's tail, and you will hear legislators and law-very talk of the hors of the land.

be taught and acquired in childhood. It is scandalous that the professors and instructors in elecution of our universities should be compelled to devote so much time to the correction of vulgarisms of speech and the slurring and mumbling of words. It is more scandalous when a corrected student asserts, 'If I were to speak correctly at home, I should be laughed at by the members of my family and the neighbors. I should be considered as putting on airs.'

It may or may not be true that the cur-

putting on airs."

It may or may not be true that the curricula of schools are already too crowded. It is true that every teacher is apt to think his specialty the most important, and backed the control of the contro by outside influence, he pushes his work to the front, and the devil takes the hind-

N thing should be more important than correct speech. Even music is now taught in many public schools and poverty-stricken indeed is that household which is not furnshed with some musical instrument or some

ished with some musical instrument or some screeching Maria or James.

That beautiful music well rendered is a refining influence is not to be disputed. But young men and women not possessed of musical voices and the talent to play musical instruments should not be encouraged beyond a love and appreciation for the statement of musical and provided hours and provided hours and provided hours. of music, and many neighborhoods would thus be rid of much cacophonous cater-

It is probable that the revival of debating the universities may restore the vogue the orator. The best speaking of to-day is that which

is heard on university debating platforms and it is largely due to the fact that "the teams" are coached in manner as well as in pronunciation At a recent debate between Harvard and Yale, both sides as well as the presiding officer were offend-ers. The latter constantly said.

ers. The latter constantly said argument (argument) and the youthful debaters spoke of wotter (water) silunce (silence). an (and), wen (when), ac.

The authorities of universities might with propriety retort that in order to make with propriety retort that in order to make
the study of delivery an intellectual pursuit, it is neither necessary nor same to
extablish a psychic relation between the
therax and the lobes of the cars, nor to
develop the soul by tone-coloring.

As for the clergy, they may well be
"Left to heaven."

And to those thorns that in their bosoms

prick and sting them " Let them practice, which is Aristotle's definition of virtue. The "smart set," which is synonymous

with the dull set, which is synonymous when it is the fashion to do so. The best elements of the complex structure of so-ciety will be guided by and will listen to the moral.

tion the charming companionship and the generous impulses of its artists, the power and its test players possess, is the theatre doing anything to promote good spoken English? Boes the speech of the stage revest the beauty of the text of Shakes-pears and our talented modern drama:ists? real work of this world is performed in silence.

It not alone in schools and colleges that one hears detestable English, and the control flog first usery the most office special special systems of the state to the clergy. No wonder that Eislon Potter lately pronounced the english language with corrections and steady produced in the control of a minister mable to speak the English language with corrections and elegance an impertuent in trusion.

Go to the Senate and House of Representatives butched the first horist and feed entance in the Courts of Justice! You will see shough and independent the first horist and feed entances and feed entances that the control of the courts of Justice. You will see shough the first horist the Potter lates the first horist and feed entances in the control of the courts of Justice. You will see shough the first horist the Potter than the control of the control of Justice. The court may be sentially speakers in their college days when under the feed of the control of a minister make the clears. He make the feed of making method of a minister make the regulators and the clear than of projecting their own in trusion.

Go to the Senate and House of Representatives to the State Legislators and law your to the control of the control of the feed of t Does it keep and has it kept side by side with the skill of the scene painter, the cos-timer and the electrician? Has any re-

more regrettable and deplorable on account of his popular success, his commanding position and the artistic beauty of his "productions."

modern education. The eye is so appealed to in instruction that the ear has lost its power. Children instead of being led and directed, have been truckled to most servilely, and Sir Henry has treated the public like children and has given them beautiful picture books, but he has destroyed their imaginations and sense of hearing.

It is no new thing to hear players say that their own period and impersonations are the best, because the "most modern." A repressed method of delivery came into fashion some years ago, and was much com-mented on as a refreshing substitute for old-fashioned ranting. It was a refreshing innovation when there was something to repress, but it has been carried to such extremes that, in most instances, it posseses no more value than a squeezed lemon

is tart but not juicy. Naturalness of delivery, even in the poetical drama, is not an invention of the mod-ern stage. It is not incompatible with a lofty and ideal expression of the highest flights of a poet's imagination, nor is it is reconcilable with a knowledge of scanning and of the difference between an lambus

It is an old trick for a player who is deficient in poetic sensibility to pose as an exponent of the prosaic and every-day, but he invariably converts the Roman sandal into the English pump and the royal crown into a top hat of large size. Amid all the tinkering and commonplace

Amid all the tinkering and commonplace search for new readings and the vulgar pronunciation, it is a pleasure to know that there are at least two conspicuous exemplars on the American stage of pronunciation and enunciation, Mrs. Fiske and Miss Marlowe. Gifted as these women are in beauty, fascination, simplicity and grace, their voices are "excellent things," and their English a delight to the ear. It is not so many years ago when the de-It is not so many years ago when the delivery of great players was the model for many clergymen, lawyers and men of other

The modern theatre with its increasing patrenage has an opportunity to reach the ears as well as the syes of the people, and it will yet seize that opportunity when, associated with its management, are men and women of letters. Grosor Ribble.

KLONDIKE GOLD IN PLENTY. So Says the Official Inspector of the British

Yukon Mines. From the San Francisco Chronicle TATOMA, Sept 20 Placer noming in the

"As a placer paying proposition the Klon-dike has yet, in my judgment, twenty years of life and for the hext two years the aumuni output of gold will combine from \$15,900,000 to \$20,000,000. By means or the dredow, steam shovel and hydrathic dredome I think every foot of ground heretonize striked the Kludike will be revorting. This will be done of course, in two summer. In fact,

HIS DOGS ARE USEFUL. Proggist Finds Profit in Naming Them

Button Hook and Collar Button BAR HARBOR, Me., Sept. 28 .- No. I don't bother about giving my dogs any individual names," said the druggist who makes most of his profits by selling whiskey to such customers as he can trust with his secret. "I just call the Boston terriers Collar Button and name the Blerbeim spaniels Button Hook, and that's al! ! need to sell them. You must know that my dogs, while nothing extra in blood o record, are bred for a special purpose, bred to do a given thing and nothing else. That's why I can sell them for \$25 each as fast as I can produce them, while my neighbors have to wait a long time and do a lot of lying to sell their dogs for \$10

all comes from being honest and giving the goods that your customers require There is nobody you can trade with so easily as the rich summer visitors, if you will keep the things they want. When started in to breed dogs for sale I kept Istarted in to breed dogs for sale I kept
lik meim spanisis for the women and
Boston terriers for the men, always trying
to have the best that money could buy.

"At the end of two years I found my
money getting low and myself with more
unsoid dogs on my hands than a poor man
cares to feed and pay taxes on. Of course,
I did some spry thinking, as any one will
do when he is poor and growing poorer

do when he is poor and growing poorer every day. I asked myself what it was I could teach a dog to do to make that dog valuable to the rich folks.

"Before I had decided what to do my wife arne into the game and settled the thing warne into the game and settled the thing warring. It was Sunday morning, and when she was 'most ready to go to hurch she wanted to button her boots, and, of course, she couldn't find the button wook. Nobody can find one when he wants the couldn't find the button warring the course when he wants the course was the course the course the course the course was the course the course the course was the course the course was the course the course was the course the course the course the course was the course t She was getting cross, because the and bell was ringing, and having no w dress to appear in, she didn't want

late.

We went through the house calling Buttenhook, buttenhook! Oh, Lord, is that buttenhook? huffy like, so wit wasn't prudent for me to put in a At that time there were a dozen more of my Blenheim spaniels asleep. plazza, and when they heard my

them got up and ran to her

"At this the idea came to me like a flash.
I would name my spaniels Buttenhook,
and snap a real buttenhook to the collar of every one, and then when the owner lost one of these useful articles, all he would Tayona, Sept 70 Placer nothing in the Klondike is yet in its infancy, according to Dr A C Robertson, inspect or of the Briblesh Yukon mines, who has just come out the Briblesh Yukon mines, who has just come out the Briblesh Yukon mines, who has just come out the says.

"As a placer paying proposition ties Klondike has yet, in my judgment, twenty years of life and for the next tan years the annual output of gold will common from \$15,00,000 to member that a man lost his collar button member that a man lost his collar button. as often as a woman misplaced her button-hook, so I named my terriers Collar Button, and they sold as well as the spaniels. Higged out with a big collar with a lot of fingged out with a big collar with a lot of brase collar buttons in their surface, in-stead of the usual gilt spike, the dogs did more for the surport of my family than any other venture I had undertaken, with the possible exception of selling liquor o topers who were too proud to enter a

"It would have been just as easy to teach the same dog to answer to both names and make them bring collar buttons well as buttenhooks, but a wealthy visitor doesn't want anything mixed, except his drinks. He had much rather pay for two dogs, each one a specialist, than have one cur that could do many things indifferently well. Here at a summer recent

> Startling Information. From the Indianapohe News.

Had you heard that Oily Mike had been

OLDEST AMERICAN ACTOR. James Booth Roberts Had That Distinct

tion When He Died Recently The right to be called the oldest American actor living passes so quickly from one person to another that it is difficult to keep in mind just who holds the distinction. Only a short time ago it was Joseph Alfred Smith and he was succeeded by James Booth Roberts. Now the honor is to go to someone else as Mr. Roberts died on Sept. 14 at Elizabeth He was 83.

Until twenty-five years ago he held a high place on the American stage and was for several years popular in England. He was born at Newcastle, Del, on Sept. 19 1818, and was one of three brothers. of them became a General in the United States Army and the other is a prosperous

merchant of this city. When he was 21 he was sent to Philadelphia to learn the trade of a chemist and for five years he worked at his task without though: of any other occupation. Then he became the victim of an attack of stage fever of that virulent kind that is to be relieved

only by going on the stage. Joseph Alfred Smith, then a youth playing boy parts at the Walnut Street Theatre used to pass his home every night on the way to the theatre and this added to his enthusiasm for the stage. He made the acquaintance of the young actor. cor flied his ambitions to him and lost no oppor tunity to associate with the members of the profession.

Finally he got the opportunity to make his first appearance on the stage, and in the company of so famous an actor as Junius Brutus Booth. He played Richmond and showed that his ambitions were founded on ability, so that the star advised him to continue his studies, which had been begun under the direction of Lemuel White, who taught Edwin Forcest.

For two years he studied without appearing in public, and when he acted again it was in the company of Edwin Forcest From that time he remained on the stage and his progress to the top was standy For ten years he acted in various stock companies throughout the country, and first in 1847 came to this city and at the Chatham Theatre played Richard III. as well as a number of Shakespearean characters in his repertoire. He played a second engagement there soon after and from that time his rank was fi and from that time his rank was fixed.

For nine years he went to all the principal cities, playing with the stock companies there the Shakespearean repertoire. In 1856 he went to England. He acted first at Drury Lane and afterward in the principal English cities. On his return he produced for the first time a version of "Faust," which he had made himself and played Mephistopheles in it until 1876.

retired from the stage and settled He retired from the stage and settled in Philadelphia nearly twenty-five years ago. He taught elocution and prepared young actors for their professional work He came to this city in March and April last to celebrate the founding of the Edwin Forrest Lodge of the Actors' Order of Friendship and to attend a meeting of the Shakespeare Birthday Society

> Some One With a Bill. From the Indianapolis Sur.

When I came home yesterday the maid messer the door.

"Mr. Thommason," she said, "some one with a bill was here yesterday.

I glanced in the parior and saw that the room was full of neighbors.

"Some one with a bill?" I queried, "was it the lawyer?"

No. answered Marie, with a smile, "it the lawyer?"
No," answered Marie, with a smile, "it was the stork.

I have since heard that some people say that the dialogue between the maidservant and myself was arranged beforehand, so as to give out the impression in the neighbor-

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